

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

BEAUMONT DIVISION

NATHAN DARRELL NEIGHBORS	§	
VS.	§	CIVIL ACTION NO. 1:13cv391
JUDGE DANA WOMAC	§	

MEMORANDUM OPINION REGARDING VENUE

Plaintiff Nathan Darrell Neighbors, an inmate currently confined in the Stiles Unit of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division, proceeding *pro se*, brings this civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against Judge Dana Womac.

The above-styled action was referred to the undersigned magistrate judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636 and the Amended Order for the Adoption of Local Rules for the Assignment of Duties to the United States Magistrate Judge for findings of fact, conclusions of law, and recommendations for the disposition of the case.

Factual Background

Plaintiff claims defendant Womac, a trial judge located in Fort Worth, Texas, conducted his trial in 2007. Plaintiff alleges he told the defendant he needed to be at the trial of his conspiracy case to show his innocence, and she knew he was incarcerated. Plaintiff claims a conspiracy has been going on for years and continues as of the date of his complaint.

Analysis

The Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. §1981, *et seq.*, under which this case is brought, does not contain a specific venue provision. Accordingly, venue in civil rights cases is controlled by 28

U.S.C. § 1391. *Jones v. Bailey*, 58 F.R.D. 453 (N.D. Ga. 1972), *aff'd per curium*, 480 F.2d 805 (5th Cir. 1973).

When, as in this case, jurisdiction is not founded solely on diversity of citizenship, 28 U.S.C. § 1391 provides that venue is proper only in the judicial district where the defendants reside or in which the claim arose. Plaintiff's claims arose in Fort Worth, Texas. Fort Worth is located in Tarrant County, Texas which is in the Northern District of Texas. Further, the defendant is employed as a judge in Fort Worth, Texas. When public officials are parties to an action in their official capacities, they reside for venue purposes in the county where they perform their official duties, which in this case is Tarrant County, Texas. *Holloway v. Gunnell*, 685 F.2d 150 (5th Cir. 1982); *Lowrey v. Estelle*, 433 F.2d 265 (5th Cir. 1976).

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 124, Tarrant County is in the Fort Worth Division of the Northern District of Texas. As Tarrant County is located in the Northern District of Texas, venue in the Eastern District of Texas is not proper.

When venue is not proper, the court "shall dismiss, or if it be in the interest of justice, transfer such case to any district or division in which it could have been brought." 28 U.S.C. § 1406(a). This case should be transferred to the Northern District of Texas, Fort Worth Division. An appropriate order so providing will be entered by the undersigned.

SIGNED this 2 day of July, 2013.



KEITH F. GIBLIN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE